

STATE OF ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK.

SIR,—As a subscriber to *THE BUILDER*, though professionally unconnected with that art to the interests of which the pages of *THE BUILDER* are more particularly devoted, I beg to tender you not only my own, but I am sure the warmest thanks of every admirer of ecclesiastical architecture, for the manner in which you have called attention to the deplorable state of the church of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, the *chef d'œuvre* of the great Wren.

As an inhabitant for many years in the immediate locality of the church, I have frequently heard foreigners and strangers, who have visited this desecrated temple, declare that its condition is at once a reproach to our nation, and an insult to the memory of that great man. Should the time ever arrive when party feeling in this parish shall be absorbed in the more becoming influences of decency and decorum, and that the sacred edifice shall be restored, and its beauties developed, which now lie hid under the accumulating filth of years, let us hope that the external approaches will be improved; at present, the tower on the north side is disfigured by a tancement erected against it; this should be removed, and an appropriate entrance made from that side of the tower, if possible. A stranger approaching from Charlotte-row passes unobserved the only entrance "retiring Walbrook" presents. The sacred edifice is thus hidden from view by the abortion erected against it, a monument of man's cupidity, and by no means uncommon in our great Babylon, but which good taste is gradually removing, much to the credit of those who have set the example. It is gratifying to observe, that in those parishes wherein are found the works of this great architect, all are not alike insensible to their merit. St. Dunstan's in the East has had full justice done to its varied beauties, and its restoration and decoration reflect the greatest credit upon the parish in which it is situated; that the parishioners of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, may follow the example, and that public attention, forcibly directed by means of the press, to the present condition of this church, may achieve this desired result, is the earnest wish, Sir, of your very obedient servant,

AN INHABITANT OF WALBROOK,
though not a parishioner of St. Stephen's.
June 14th, 1847.

SIR,—Should your able appeal on the subject of the restoration of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, rouse the people of England, and of London in particular, from their lethargy, and induce them (as I hope it will) to come nobly forward to assist in the work, I beg leave to express a hope that the exterior appearance, as well as the interior, will be cared for, and that the ugly excrescence adjoining the church at the corner of the street (at present a bookseller's shop) will be removed, as has been done in a neighbouring parish in Lombard-street, to the infinite improvement of the appearance of the church. But to do the thing thoroughly, I consider that St. Stephen's, and indeed all our churches, should be completely detached from the surrounding houses, and this not only on the score of appearance, but also on the score of utility, as a preservative against their destruction by fire, to which they are at all times liable, if not isolated.

And this applies with peculiar force to this gem of our city churches, for who is there that would not regret its destruction? and none more so than,

Yours truly, A LONDONER.

MARCH OF THE SCHOOLMASTER AMONGST THE "NAVVIERS."—The following "business-like" tender was lately made, not 100 miles from Harrogate we suppose, for a quantity of digging, prior to laying a length of piping:—"May 31st, 1847, sir, I James Wallis and Co. does Mutually agree to take the Digging of you at 6d. per cube yard if you consent to agree to our agreement the Said Digging belonging to the said gas Works of K.—We Do undecign James Wallis and Co."

THE THOUSAND POUNDS PRIZE PICTURE.—Our readers may have seen by advertisement that the prize has been awarded where we said it was due, namely to Mr. John Wood. The artist, we are glad to be able to state, has received the money.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COL-
LATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Cologne.—What would seem incredible—the rebuilding of the cathedral is lagging behind; the subscriptions and contributions begin to flow sparingly. A great fault has been committed it seems in the building of the provisional roof, because, as here a certain would-be or forced completion of the structure has been indicated, the very sting of the affair (so much with us frail mortals) has been taken away.

Gaertner's Successors.—The building of the Hall of Liberty, be-widowed by the premature death of the great artist, has been intrusted by the king to Von Klenze, who has already made a survey of its progress. The pediment is now completed, and in the course of the year also, the eighteen columns which have to adorn the interior of the great hall, will be placed. These huge granite monoliths, 4 feet thick and 24 high, have been obtained from the quarries of Hassenberg, near Paderborn, and weigh 7 to 800 cwt. Their transport to the banks of the Danube required the construction of especial waggons of iron, of which the wheels weigh 18 to 20 cwt.—the whole 180 cwt.

Munich Art-news.—Kaulbach has completed his great cartoon, "The Fall of Nimrod," and made a small sketch of it in colours. It is at Berlin, where, in the course of this summer, he will execute this great work. On the other hand, Schönrer is expected at Munich for working at his frescoes of the Nibelungen Lied, in the royal palace.—The Pinskotheka has been, of late, adorned, through the liberality of the king, with a picture of Lesueur's "Christ and Martha." It belonged to the Fesch collection, and has been placed in the Saloon of Italian and French schools, and it is one of the finest specimens of the old French style of painting.

ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS.

SIR,—It is a pity that builders and architects cannot come to some better understanding as to their true relative position towards each other and themselves, because their interests are in many points identical. The architect of any practice knows what embarrassments and difficulties he has (beyond the onerous duties which legitimately attend his profession), to contend with by business undertaken at too low an estimate, and that it not unfrequently accounts for the disproportion between the additional works and the original contract that may attend any building; the contractor taking advantage of their occurrence, to set right a false calculation. I have lately had a dispute on the following point:—Notice was given to some six or seven builders, to inform them that tenders would be received for erecting a certain building, of a public nature, when the following clause was objected to by two most respectable and responsible firms, who refused, in consequence, to tender at all.

"That the competitor whose tender shall be accepted, will be required, as a condition of it, to submit the details of his estimate, which is to form a schedule of the prices for any addition or deduction that may arise in the progress of the proposed building, but no such alterations are in any way to vitiate the contract."

Now the object of this clause was to enable alterations (if required) to be made in the structure on the same scale of charges as the contract itself, whether more or less, but it was objected to on the following ground, viz., that it would afford the architect or employer the opportunity of exchanging the work which might be highest in price, for other which might be lowest in price, and thus deprive the contractor who made the lowest tender of the only opportunity of righting himself. I see and admit that there is some force in the argument, but on the other hand, if the case be looked at thoroughly, it will be seen that the clause is calculated to protect the most respectable class of builders, by making every competitor rely upon a fair valuation of each item, such as will at least cover his expenses and yield some reasonable profit for his time and capital, thus insuring (as far as it can be done) a *bona fide* competitor against a haphazard candidate for the work, who might rely upon the doctrine of chances for getting through a job by unfair means.

I ought to add, that the objecting parties offered to give a schedule of prices for alterations, but then the difficulty attending a competition of schedules will be obvious; the party whose gross estimate was lowest might have the highest schedule, or if it was to be limited to the party whose tender was the lowest, it would amount to a mere dictation of his own terms for alterations, which the architect could not agree to in justice to his employer.

AN ARCHITECT.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

TWO London, Brighton, and South Coast Company are about to erect a large hotel at New-haven; also a custom-house, and two 'splendid' stations, bonding warehouse, engine-house, coke-oven, &c. They have already constructed a wharf 1,100 feet long; and it is intended to have a covered corridor from the hotel to the wharf.—At a dinner at Ringwood, on Tuesday, commemorative of the opening of the Dorchester line of railway, says the *Hampshire Advertiser*, "Captain Moorson, the engineer of the line, communicated the astounding intelligence to his hearers that 'the sinking of the railway tunnel was owing to the desire of Mr. Peto to accommodate the authorities of Southampton! By filling up a portion of the old canal tunnel, an irregularity of pressure had been caused, producing a disarrangement in the brickwork to an extent of about 70 feet.' If the tunnel had not been filled up, then, the accident would not have occurred! Captain Moorson should have said that if it had been filled up with concrete at first, as advised by the Southampton surveyors, it would have been safe, but it was at first neglected as of no consequence. Then, when the ground began to sink, loose earth was thrown in, which would not add one tittle to its strength, and the whole portion of the work where the tunnels cross each other has been a series of blunders, with which the authorities of Southampton have had no more to do than the gentleman in the moon."

On Saturday week, an arch 12 feet in span, 60 feet in length, and consisting of three rings, in which upwards of 12,000 bricks were used, was thrown across the Gipping, on the Eastern Union line, by four men, who turned the arch by 4 o'clock p.m. By a slight inversion, or it may be subversion, of sense, we may say with the poet "If 'twere done quickly, 'twere well done, were it done well."—The Lincoln station of the London and York line, it is said, will be begun very shortly. It is to be in the Elizabethan style, with platforms 500 feet long and 18 wide. The Norwich public have now the benefit of a three mile penny trip into the country twice a day, three times a week, besides Sundays, and we doubt not the spirited directors will also have the benefit of so good an example.—The works of the Rugby and Stamford line, near Harborough, are in rapid progress by night as well as day.—Mr. J. E. Hall, of Nottingham, has contracted for building the new passenger station at Nottingham and Mr. Haywood, of Derby, for the iron-work; the two contracts amount to nearly 15,000l. The digging of the foundation was commenced on the 2nd inst. Mr. G. Hall, of Derby, is the company's architect.—The Crimpley viaduct on the Harrogate and Church Fenton line, near Harrogate, is far advanced towards completion. It consists of 31 arches, each of 52 feet span, the loftiest 130 feet in height. The piers on which they rest, 32 in number, are about 20 feet each in thickness at the base, and are composed of immense blocks of hard granite. The line at the south end is carried through a long deep tunnel; while at the opposite extremity it proceeds along a deep rocky cutting. The whole length of the masonry is about 1,858 feet.—The masons employed in the construction of the high-level bridge at Newcastle, struck work on Saturday week. They had 28s. per week, and demanded 30s. "Many of them," says the *Gateshead Observer*, "did not wait for an answer; they packed up their tools, and started for other parts, where high wages are being paid. At Hull, for instance, the masons are earning (so we are informed) 35s. a week."—A complete army of workmen is engaged at the summit of the Caledonian line, near Beattock bridge. The contractors, Messrs. J. Stephenson and Co., have 500 men